

The Eastern Bluebird

The Eastern Bluebird is usually 5.5 inches in length and has a thin bill.

Females have:

- Blue wings and tail-duller than male
- Gray crown and back
- White eye ring
- Brownish throat, breast and sides
- White belly and undertail coverts



Males have:

- Bright blue upperparts
- Orange-red throat, breast and sides
- White belly and undertail coverts



Teenagers have:

- Blue wings
- Gray crown back
- White eye ring
- Spotted underparts



Location

The most usual place that the bluebirds will nest in is the abandoned, hollowed out trees where woodpeckers used to live. They are also semi colonial nesters, meaning they tend to nest where past bluebirds have nested as well.



In the later part of summer and fall, they will nest together. However, in the winter, they live in a family group and join other birds with flocks ranging from 10-50 birds. If it is cold, they will live together in the small cavity of a tree to stay warm. The migration of the birds depends on the weather of that area as well as how much food is available. While migrating, some birds stay behind, and some leave, so they do not always stay together.

Feeding

The bluebirds usually feed by swooping down from a branch and catching a grasshopper or other small insect. Their eyesight is so good that they can locate food from about 100 feet away. However, in the later part of summer and winter, fresh fruits become an important part of their diet. Even so, throughout a year, their diet consists of mainly invertebrates.

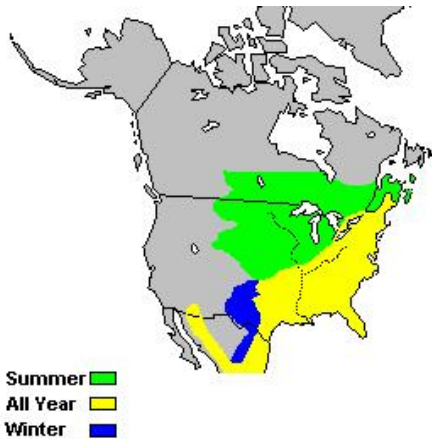


A good habitat for them is in open grassy areas with suitable nest sights nearby, such as an orchard or edges of a swamp or forest.



Some bluebird facts:

This is where the bluebirds are throughout the year.



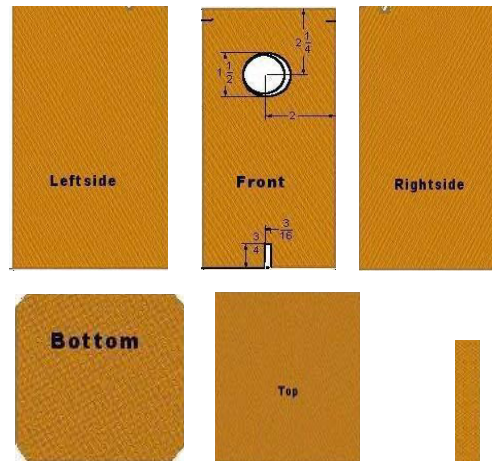
The Eastern Bluebird population has been declining in the past years to as low as 17 percent compared to their numbers in the 1950s and 1960s. Some reasons were weather, pesticides, and competition for nesting sites.

The scientific name for the Eastern Bluebird is *Sialia sialis*.



How to Make the Birdhouse

Here's how we made our birdhouses:



This is the back of the birdhouse from the side. →
It's the same width as the box itself, however it is longer.



The top (lid) of the birdhouse connects by a hinge and has a hook on the side to latch shut. The left and right sides are equal, while the back of the birdhouse is a greater amount. It's slightly longer and has holes drilled into it so you can mount it on a fence post. To put the birdhouse together we just used finishing nails. They are more durable and reliable than just wood glue.

About the Project

There were many projects to pick from, however, my troop and I really wanted to make an impact on the wildlife. We love birds and thought it would be a nice idea to help out a park that we enjoy visiting. The Eastern Bluebirds are unique and they aren't just an ordinary bird. You have to carefully place the birdhouses in the correct place. If they are misplaced, then the birds will not inhabit the area. For example, if the birdhouse is facing the wind, the bird will not live there because the wind will harm them. We specifically went and made sure that when we set up all of the birdhouses, they were facing away from the wind and were safe for living purposes.

It was a lot of fun and we cannot wait to see the results of the bird population at the park. Since the project, my troop and I have a new respect for birds and the wildlife. It opened our eyes to how different birds really are and how no two types are the same. I know that we will visit the park again and again and see the Eastern Bluebirds living in the birdhouses that we made.

Troop 434
2006